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WASHINGTON'S 9TH DISTRICT

Sound Insulation Treatment Repair and Replacement Program Act Rep. Adam Smith (WA-09)

Background: Thousands of households live in communities suffering from the impacts of aviation noise and emissions. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and airports have limited programs available to mitigate homes from these impacts.

Many airports have opted to use the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) fund to pay for noise mitigation, however, there are many limits in the federal regulations over AIP, including barring the use of AIP funds on the same home or structure twice. This regulation prevents airports from ever replacing or repairing sound insulation if the products become defective or cause problems for the homeowner.

The Problem: Airports that funded sound insulation in homes and structures in the 1980's and 1990's often did not have access to high quality materials, and in some cases, contractors installed sound insulation without proper ventilation or structural supports. This has caused structural damage, mold, and other problems in some homes and buildings. Without the ability to use AIP funds to do repairs and replacements, homeowners are left on the hook for the costs of fixing problems they were not responsible for. While most of the problems with noise mitigation are reported by homeowners who had insulation installed in the early days of noise mitigation programs, they do not currently have sufficient recourse due to federal restrictions on AIP funds.

The **Sound Insulation Treatment Repair and Replacement Program Act** would allow the FAA to waive the regulation that bars airports from using AIP funds on the same project twice. While the bill does not *require* that airports repair and replace sound insulation, it offers airports the option to use AIP funds if they do want to repair or replace sound insulation. Residences that fall within the 65 DNL contour are eligible for re-mitigation in the following instances:

- The materials used have deteriorated or no longer function as intended due to product defects or faulty installation (must be verified by an FAA compliant noise auditor); or
- The products used in the noise mitigation package have failed and are beyond their expected product lifetime (as determined by the manufacturer at the time of installation).

The bill includes several guardrails and restrictions, including:

- Limiting repairs and replacements to residences that still fall within the airport's current 65 DNL contour except in cases where a building inspector finds that the mitigation caused physical damage to the building or other structure or where materials used have deteriorated or are no longer functional.
- Requiring an FAA compliant noise auditor to evaluate the home and verify that the issues with the sound insulation are due to improper installation or faulty materials, not due to homeowner neglect.

As many communities around airports struggle with the impacts of noise, far too many households lack access to resources that can mitigate its impact on their health and wellbeing. The **Sound Insulation Treatment Repair and Replacement Program Act** is an important step to help unlock federal resources for households who need their sound insulation repaired or replaced.

This legislation is endorsed by: The Port of Seattle